

SPORTS

RTR sweeps semi-finals, finals of intramural playoffs

CPL. ALISHA R. FITZGERALD  
STAFF WRITER

RTR defeated Naval Hospital 43-30 and 51-36 to win the 2004 Tri-Command Intramural Basketball Playoff Championship at the Air Station's Paul L. Siegmund Fitness Complex Monday.

RTR came up through the losers' bracket to win three consecutive games on the final night of the tournament to become the league champion.

Hospital was the team that put RTR in the losers' bracket in the first place, defeating them 38-31 on the third night of the tournament. After the loss, RTR was rejuvenated and went on to advance to the semi-finals against Dirty Dental, which was the first of their three games they played on Monday.

They defeated them 45-40, proceeding to the finals against their season nemesis – Naval Hospital.

"They were stronger than what we thought," said Hospital Head Coach Harry Barnes. "We never thought they could win three games in a row. That blew me away."

RTR had yet to beat Hospital all year, and after round three, it looked like the tournament would prove to come out the same, but the RTR players went on to prove that history would not repeat itself in their case.

"Each time we played them, we learned more and more about their game," said Michael Fisher, head coach for RTR. "We knew how they played. We played many close games

with them before, but were never able to finish because we weren't playing our style of basketball."

The pressure of the playoffs and the do-or-die mentality of the RTR players enabled them to reach deep and come out with the best demonstration of basketball they had produced all year, according to Fisher.

The team relied on its strongest areas to come through in the clutch.

"The key for us was pressure on their guards," said Fisher. "I think that's what enabled us to get over the hump this time. We were able to capitalize off the match-ups."

Mike Martinet, guard for RTR, was one of the most instrumental players in this particular line of attack, according to Fisher.

His all-over-the-floor scrappiness produced many turnovers for Hospital and led to many scoring opportunities for RTR.

Fisher also relied heavily on his inside players to shut down Hospital's inside threat, center Michael Groves, whose dramatic dunks and blocks have been a focal point of league play all season. He said Howard Moore, Donnell Jackson and Bryan Cambell contributed significantly in this area, forcing Hospital to depend on a less reliable outside shooting game.

"We couldn't buy baskets," said Barnes. "We played flat. Our defense had a few spurts, but we couldn't maintain it."

While Hospital struggled with

their game, RTR players, like point guard Jefferey Young, were stepping up, enabling RTR to control both of the finals games.

Although Young and other individual players were key to the win, Fisher stressed that the outcome weighed heavily on an overall team effort.

"I can't really say that one person stands out over the others," he said. "Those players who normally only get a couple of minutes of playing time were just as important as the starters during the finals. I had to continue rotating to keep everyone fresh. After already playing two games, we had to go through our bench in order to win the last one."

Winning the championship was a bittersweet end to a hard-fought season for RTR for several reasons. The players not only achieved satisfaction by defeating a season rival, but also by winning one in the name of Depot Marines.

"It would've been all Navy in the championship if we hadn't stepped up," said Fisher. "We showed the heart of the Marines within RTR and proved that out of 18 teams in the entire Tri-Command, we were the better team on the court."

Fisher will not be back to defend his team's title next year, but a few of the RTR players plan to return. Next season's games will be played back aboard the Depot, once again separating the Air Station and Depot into two leagues.



Cpl. Alisha R. Fitzgerald  
**Mike Martinet, guard for RTR, looks for an open teammate in the finals of the 2004 Tri-Command Intramural Basketball Playoffs against Naval Hospital at the Air Station's Paul L. Siegmund Fitness Complex Monday. RTR came out of the losers' bracket and won the championship 51-36.**

Bulls dominate Celtics 15-3, remain undefeated in league

LANCE CPL. BRIAN  
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STAFF WRITER

The Bulls defeated the Celtics 15-3 in the 9- to 10-year-old Marine Corps Community Services-South Carolina youth basketball league at the Depot MCCS-SC gym Feb. 24.

The Bulls, led by the scoring of Anthony Taylor, Jr., remain undefeated after crushing the hopes of a gold tournament birth for the Celtics.

Taylor's 11 points in the game equaled that of the deficit that the Celtics faced in the second half.

The Celtics effort in the game was accented by an accidental blow to the nose of one of their players. Just as that player did not stop to show any displeasure from the pain, the entire team never let the score affect their intensity. They moved onto each play displaying an unwavering resilience.

"I was happy to see that they didn't give up," said Josh Cathey, coach for the Celtics. "For what the score was we played good and didn't get rough and I am real happy with my guys for doing that."

The Celtics kept their heads held high and in doing so, made the Bulls road to victory and an undefeated season a tough one in the end.

After giving up 11 points in the first half, the Celtics tightened their defense and played with pure heart in the second half.

"They impressed me with their defense," said Anthony Taylor, coach for the Bulls. "They [stayed] with our main players and really slowed us down."

The Bulls players rallied around the play of Anthony Taylor Jr., the high scoring guard who led his team right into the gold tournament.

"His presence on the court took us a long ways," said Taylor. "This is his fourth year and he knows how to read the defense and run the

offense. If he has the ball I tell him, if [your teammates] don't want to move, take it yourself."

Taylor believes his team will be able to confuse opponents through a series of fast breaks that allow the point guards to set up plays designed to confuse any defense they will face.

"I want to get into the tournament and run some strong plays," said Taylor. "If we confuse them at the beginning, then I am going to run fast breaks the whole time."

While Taylor has calculated his team's formula for success in the playoffs, Cathey anticipates a lot of hard work to get his team ready.

"I coached in town last year and have a feel for what [the competition] is going to be like," said Cathey. "We are going to be ready for that, and hopefully we will be better then. We are going to keep practicing and try to win."

The Celtics may not be undefeated and heading for the gold tournament, but they have the backing and admiration of their coach.

"They are the best team in the league," said Cathey. "I'm proud of my kids and I will coach them anytime, any year."

**Sparks vs. Parris Island Comets 14-12**

The Sparks defeated the Parris Island Comets 14-12 in the 9- to 10-year-old Beaufort County Parks and Leisure Services youth basketball league at the Depot MCCS-SC gym Feb. 28.

After a back and fourth first half, the Sparks, led by the scoring of Deja Jackson, fought through a close second half to a last-minute win.

"At this age, the games are going to go like that," said Debra Jackson, coach for the Sparks. "They have some jitters to start the game out with. Then, they start to get into the flow about the third or fourth quarter when they settle down."

The over-excitement stems from being new to the sport,



Lance Cpl. Brian Kester  
**Lauren Ware, a Sparks forward, runs down court during a game at the Depot Marine Corps Community Services-South Carolina gym Feb. 28. The Sparks close 14-12 win put an end to the Comets seven-game winning streak.**

as many of the players in this age bracket have never played before, said Jackson. That can lead to a bit of the lackluster or overzealous effort by the teams.

"If they look at the scoreboard and it is really close, they will play a little bit more aggressive, but if they are in the lead, then they will lax back," said Jackson. "With this age group we are still working on their consistency, but we are getting there."

Riding a seven-game winning streak that ended with the match against the Sparks, Ray Glover, coach for the Comets, was not shaken, and remains confident in his team.

"The game was back and forth because we had plenty of shots and chances, but we didn't use the backboard," said Glover. "We have two tall players and one was gone today so we had to make some changes."

Playing the finale without one of his key players, Glover

feels that his team will get some retribution come tournament time.

"They snapped our seven-game winning streak, but we'll see them in the playoffs," said Glover. "We will have to work on our inside game and our outside shots so there will be no surprises, but we'll do a good job."

After the win on Saturday, the Sparks, who played their final game Monday, will then turn their focus onto the playoffs and the Comets, who they will play in the first round of the single-elimination tournament.

"We will have to make some adjustments because they have two taller girls and we only have one that is really aggressive," said Jackson.

The playoffs, running Saturday to March 13, will take place at Mink Point Elementary School, with the final game scheduled to be played at the Burton Wells Sporting Complex.



Lance Cpl. Brian Kester  
**Anthony Taylor Jr., the Bulls leading scorer, runs down court during a game against the Celtics at the Depot Marine Corps Community Services-South Carolina gym Feb 24.**



# Intramural Volleyball is back!

Monday and Wednesday in the new Combat Fitness Center gym



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